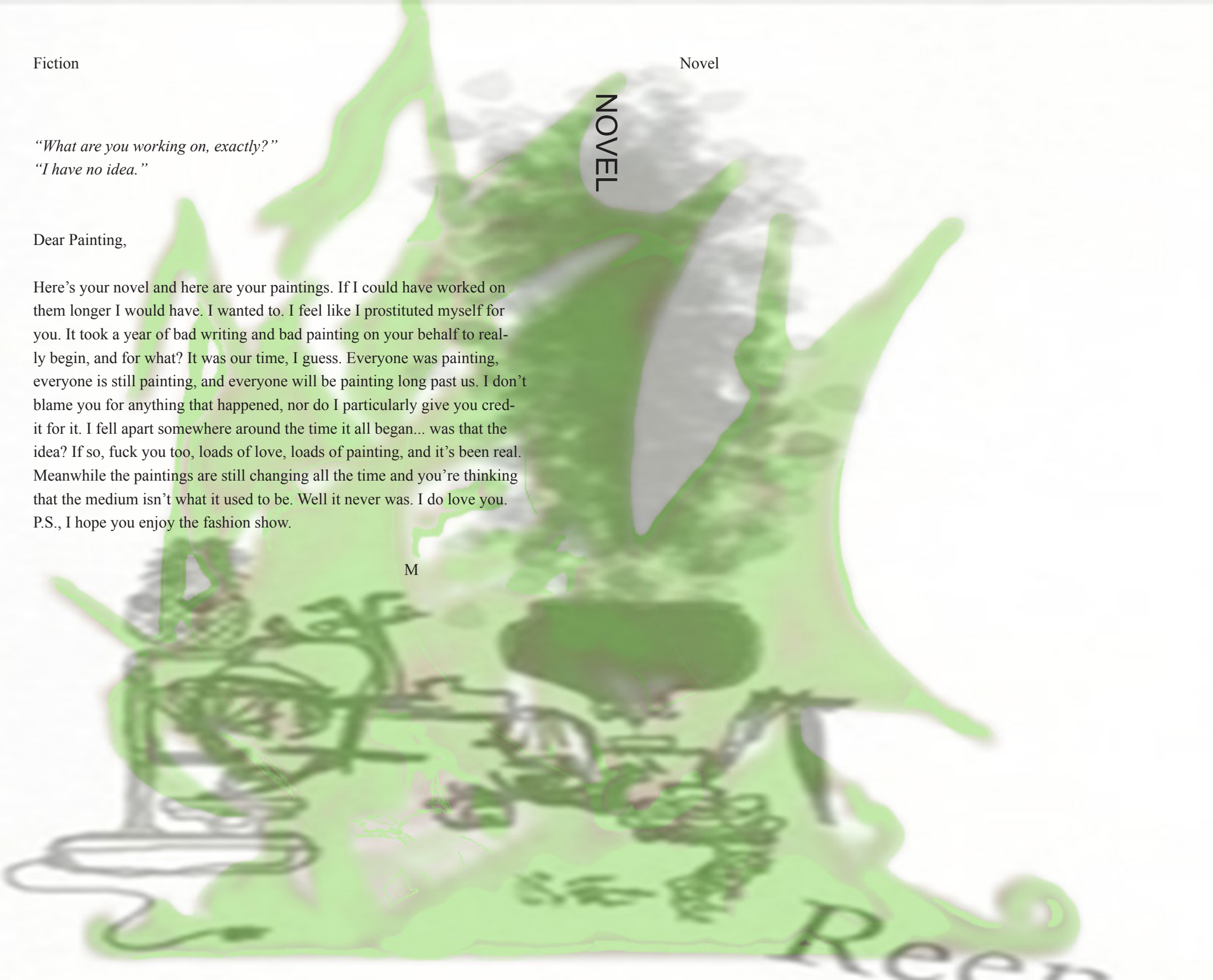
NOVEL

“What are you working on, exactly?”
“I have no idea.”

Dear Painting,

Here’s your novel and here are your paintings. If I could have worked on them longer I would have. I wanted to. I feel like I prostituted myself for you. It took a year of bad writing and bad painting on your behalf to really begin, and for what? It was our time, I guess. Everyone was painting, everyone is still painting, and everyone will be painting long past us. I don’t blame you for anything that happened, nor do I particularly give you credit for it. I fell apart somewhere around the time it all began... was that the idea? If so, fuck you too, loads of love, loads of painting, and it’s been real. Meanwhile the paintings are still changing all the time and you’re thinking that the medium isn’t what it used to be. Well it never was. I do love you.
P.S., I hope you enjoy the fashion show.

M



Novel

Novel

Credits

Novel
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Published in Los Angeles, CA 90012
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ISBN:
Printed in the United States of America

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Preface

Painting, as it turned out, was the ultimate irony. It wasn't because of the whole trompe l'oeil thing nor was it because of sculpture or Duchamp or the market or even it's resurgence after being claimed as dead. Painting was ironic in a way that one might say all art is ironic. That is to say that everyone had their own definition of what it was. And in reality, no one cared. At the end of the long day it was often to be seen that people, or the masses. didn't care about Art. They cared about science, about math, about gossip, about their cars, about what was on the stove for dinner. And the painter herself, honest to god, knew that a life-long pursuit devoted to the medium was crazy. It was quite possibly antithetical to everything she believed in which, in actuality, was close to nil.

Yet, against all odds, it was the case. And why wouldn't it be? What else was there to do? As it turned out, a lot. In 2021, in the heat of September, those living in society were absolutely sure it was 20 years post 9/11. The headlines were that U.S. troops had withdrawn from Afghanistan and things were quickly turning to shit. But in the cities in America, things were already spiraling out of control. They had been for quite some time and they no doubt would continue to do so. By the following spring the world had broken out into war.

Looking and being looked at seemed to be the only things people truly cared about. But nothing was certain! Even these words, even this novella. It seemed that there was a lot of call for the crisis-actor but where was all the money?

By December 2021 Omicron had picked up speed and people were and had been, doing speed, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday nights. The emerging adults were having a blast. They lived in the cities, they were migrating to the cities, they were working from home and not wearing masks. Artists were everywhere. They were birthed from the wombs of gold and silver-bolted vaults with those wheels you saw in movies or on big boats. And there were others, those who were not having fun, being pushed to the fringes. What was going on? It was like a boiling kettle without a whistle, or with a whistle so low one couldn't discern it from the other room. One day, in the distant future, the house was going to burn down, the stove would pop and WHOMP! anarchy. The gallery directors wouldn't allow that. Or would they?

Painting, like everything else in this godforsaken culture, needed a new story... but who would write it? Maybe we would go to grad school to get an MFA in creative writing to write that. Time would tell. As for now, there was a lot of sleep, there was a lot of painting, there was a lot of sewing, there was a lot of bullshit streaming out of the eyesockets and the valves of the body. No one was happy and no one was a god. And it turned out, of course, that society did not owe us happiness and culture did not owe us transcendence. The only thing to ponder maybe was what did culture give us. What the fuck were we all doing here anyways.

In the meantime, She had the suspicion that Art, at the end of the day, was really just narcissism, the decision to memorialize an occurrence or image. If this was the case, the problem then was what would that be.

YOU UNDERSTAND THAT ART IS SHIT SO YOU CHOOSE TO BURN IT UP

WELL...YES BUT WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE

Novel

Chapter 1

When she first moved west and then went back east there was a lot of joke about that SNL skit. Were people were truly like that? Like a proper girl she would clear her throat and say, “yes”. People out west were exactly like they were on TV. People everywhere liked small talk, and liked to compare things to movies, to TV, to pop culture. She liked this too. But she was also interested in the things that filled the home and the things that were put on the body. She liked this little tale that Baudrillard wrote about of an eighteenth century illusionist who builds an automaton so perfect that, when on stage performing with it, the audience becomes unsure which is which, or whom is whom, and by necessity the illusionist makes his own gestures mechanical. The solution therefore becomes that the man is mistaken for the machine and vice versa. This was not a new concept. But when did it all begin? 5500 years ago when the first wheel was invented: the potter’s wheel. She didn’t know much about pottery, but she had one or two ceramics in her house. D liked pottery, and upon the first time they met, he explained that his move out west caused the shattering of a pot from over 2000 years ago. Things rarely exploded anymore.

This glass protects the burners but also serves as an extra countertop. I didn’t know it was supposed to be lifted the first time I saw one, when I was staying in an airbnb with M, and I was sautéing mushrooms when it literally exploded. I was sautéing the mushrooms over the glass, yes the burner on, and it just went WOHHKSKKKK-KCMPSMXX and the only thing that saved it from hitting me was the mushroom pan shielding my face. Literally it came out in all direc-

tions like this high. It cost $2000 to fix. So yeah it's supposed to be like a splash guard for the tiles.

These days it felt like most things were going backwards. Everything was getting bigger and larger and fatter while at the same time immaterial and not there. Products were obese and bloated and invisible. The iPhone 12 plus was huge! Looking at a screen that large hurt her eyes. What she thought people needed was some sort of subtraction. Did people read books anymore? Books were identity-forming. Scale was identity-forming. Words, fonts, clothes, pots and pans, these things were identity-forming. Well stack the paintings on the books. Was there ever a time when things had meaning, substance, meat. Being a vegetarian or vegan these days was so boring.

Maybe the issue was that she was born too late like everyone else. She was born before the turn of the millennium in a quiet town with still air. She didn't like going back. In fact, she never wanted to go back. Where did she want to go? *The octopus has eight limbs and each arm has significant local control. It can still reach and grasp even after a limb has been severed. Have you ever seen an octopus squeeze between a tight gap? And then explode out onto the other side? Sometimes the female cannibalizes the male after they have sex and after the female lays eggs, her body will self destruct through cellular suicide until she dies.* Maybe she wanted to be an octopus.

Her house was quaint and she lived alone. She rarely cooked because she was single and depressed but she was working on it. She had one onion, tabasco, sometimes tomatoes if she went to the farmers market, salt in a wasabi-tin. Not once had she even opened her oven she didn't even know what was in there. She ate a lot of crackers and sometimes there was deli meat in the fridge. There was lots and lots of coffee around. Sometimes she would come home at 11:30 and make a cup of coffee to pass out. She had lots of fabric around because she was working on a fashion collection. In the center of her bedroom was a low table with her fish Vapir's bowl. Vapir

was a black and silver betta koi fish and she loved him more than anything or anyone else in the city she lived in. With him, her life was themed: oceanic after hours party. The lighting emanated from a collaged source of lamps and candles that were staked directly into their surfaces. She had no curtains and she sometimes could hear the neighbors unlocking their door whispering, “she’s reading”. When she wasn’t home she was at the studio. Everything in her house, just like everything in her life, was green and was for sale.

Up on the walls there were drawings by TJ, Z, M and D, and on the windowsill was a painting by K. Recently she had put away a framed piece by K who went by “Taco”. Taco wasn’t around anymore and she felt weird that she didn’t feel weird about having his painting still up. She liked his paintings even if she didn’t want to fuck him. He did this thing she thought was so cool because it was so direct, which was that he didn’t mix the oil at all, it was straight out of the tube and followed exactly the brush stroke. He had no idea what linseed oil or gamsol was. Once she asked him if he cleaned his brushes and he laughed and said something like, what is that. He was painting this avatar who was at the store buying beer or mixing a potion in a cauldron...that was the one she had. He would pick up frames from the Goodwill on Sunset and put the paintings inside them, which were on cardboard. The paintings weren’t bogged down with anything and she loved that about them. On the other side of the spectrum was someone like K who was so far gone that he was making mathematical paintings about ping pong.

Chapter 2

She was a painter and she loved everything about Painting. All day and all night she was thinking about Painting. She was painting, she was looking at paintings, she was writing about paintings. She was also not painting, not looking at paintings and not writing about paintings. Whatever the circumstances of her daily activities, it was always looming over her, or rather looming around her, on top and within her. It was as if God had dumped a bucket of Painting over her body and FUCK, it was staining everything!

Why were people painting crossed legs in corduroys? Why were people painting cats in cars without catalyic converters? What she loved the most these days was a drawing by Z that said some day it would all be worth it. Would any of this, one day, be worth it? If the back was signed, maybe, in the future, if you flipped it, maybe it'd be worth it. She would need money one day because she had student loans and credit card bills and parking tickets for a car that required gasoline. She would probably not pay any of it off.

When she told people that she wasn't interested in paying off her debt they often looked at her with their teeth clamped and their lips peeled back attempting to curve upwards and so she would have to quickly shift gears."Oh, haha. OK. It's ok, you know, because credit, whatever, I'll never end up buying property anyways." Sometimes the only way to deal with life was drinking but she didn't really like drinking anymore. In the car, in December, she was driving down the street thinking, it's all because of Spotify. If people owned tangible things, you know, they would have a sense of ownership.

Sometimes in bed she would lay awake with the crippling

anxiety that maybe she was just a graphic designer. Was it that all painting was just graphic design? A lot of painting was just fashion. Or was it a series of fonts? Signifiers for what exactly? Fashion, painting, it was all so silly. How many people were wearing those shirts with the gothic font down the sleeves or across the chest but had no connection to or awareness of it's previous histories? How much did history matter? How many umbilical cords were we desperately trying to saw with our car keys. Any at all? Appropriation? Gentrification? It was all a slippery slope. Was it enough to be aware of the politics? She thought the answer was no, but people were busy. Hey, who could blame them! Not her. People were busy doing absolutely everything and ultimately nothing. People were just trying to survive. Where was the script printed, the FedEx on Grand? 95-GFA-BW1 in D9?

The thing about fashion was that it was concrete, the situational setting, italicized. It was on the body and it was on the street and it was walking down the street towards you saying something.

Chapter 3

FASHION IS THE MOST DESIRABLE FORM BECAUSE IT IS NOT ABOUT INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY. IT IS A LUBRICANT TO FACILITATE THE CODIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION OF A SINGULAR IDENTITY. THE GRUNGE-BUNNY KNOWS THAT HIS INDIVIDUAL STYLE AND DRESS IS SECURED ONLY WHEN THAT PARTICULAR STYLE IS ADOPTED AND WORN BY ALL HIS GRUNGE-BUNNY FRIENDS.

Fashion is a material good that you buy from the store, from the mall, from the internet. Maybe you sew your own clothes. Well this, too, requires purchase. A sewing machine, a bolt of fabric, pins, a commercial pattern or, if you knew a thing or two, pattern paper to bootleg your own designs. Either way it isn't free, unless you are pillaging your clothes from the street or from your older brother's closet. How do you want to look? It is hard to tell economic demographic from clothing. We all know someone who has a lot of money and decides to dress like trash. You would be a fool to judge a book by it's cover. But on a general level, keeping up with fashion cost a pretty penny. Keeping up with Spring/Summer, Fall/Winter, Resort... one time releases, anti-seasonal collections, this required quite a bit of attention.

Chapter 4

Thanks to the sophistication of the modern-day media gurus, the literal purpose of your work can be abstracted and image-based—your purpose can be "fun." What wasn't there to make paintings about? Now, take a moment and project yourself into the very near future, maybe a little later this afternoon: churning out…images because people like your images and you expect yourself to produce images. Look back to your roots and the gutter that you crawled up out of. Where were the images? The images were words on paper. You say, I don't sell anything therefore I am free. The commodity culture you outsmarted still exists, excludes others, and makes their lives miserable. The spaces you inhabit are carved out for you by people on the margins, and as your life gets "better" their life gets worse. Once you are responsible for hundreds of followers and volumes of production it will be too late to rethink the process, so post the following question to yourself in all your notes from day one: why become a painter in the first place? Because you believe in it.

Chapter 5

Interlude

She believed you could substitute “painter” with corporation of 1.

Chapter 6

Everyone, in one way or another, is concerned with a specific person. A lover, a painter, a reflection in the mirror. Conversation gave way to affiliations. Didn't people feel a sense of pleasure in keeping things discreet? The answer seemed to be no.

Recently she had spent two hours listening to A sob about how she didn't want to talk for a whole entire year. *I just can't keep up with it all*. It was hard living in an economy driven by the pursuit of pleasure where a sense of pleasure is always coupled with coming up short. On the back of *The Letters of Mina Harker* Eileen Myles writes: sex is survival—for cultures, and not about reproduction, but about presence and being here and radical lives. Maybe the answer was to just have way more sex. Were people having sex?

When she read Bellamy's writing she felt like she was laying in bed in the city she preferred (not this god awful wasteland) or she was sitting in the park and it was sunny and it was warm and she was not waiting for anyone or anything to happen. The only thing that meant something were the words themselves. It was better than an orgasm. Once in a class she had taken a while ago CK had asked if anyone had experienced that overwhelming feeling of attraction to someone that was so strong you were prepared to give up everything and enter into a whirlwind of chaos and unpredictability that was contingent on how long desire lasts and up to the whim of another person. People were silent. A said he had felt this maybe as a teenager. She wanted to pipe up and say yes this happens to me every single day. The eroticism of the fantasy — and this wasn't just with people it was with paintings and books and…the fantasy of completing a re-

ally good book, well that just made her want to throw her whole life away. It was easier to toss things with force than to sit and stew with the thing taunting you. *Sometimes I just get so mad I have to leave. Like I can't be in that space anymore. God I get so fucking PISSED.*

She had started to tell people she was going to stop painting and just work on being a writer and a reader. But that would never happen. Reading painting looking listening these were about presence and to hell with all the rest.

On Sunday, on God's day, I masturbate not to porn but to a really good book or an arthouse film and on days where everything sucks I go to the Met and I masturbate to Cezanne.

That is, quite frankly, the stupidest thing I've heard. If you're going to go to the lengths to masturbate at the Met you should really be in the Frank Lloyd Wright room.

But isn't there original carpet in there?

Well I'm not sure if it's original but it doesn't matter much anyways because there is a rope, and there's usually 1-2 families so there's a bit of a buffer zone.

On a long weekend in CDMX A had been telling a story about how his friend had recently cum inside of the girl he was fucking and had fallen in love. At the end of the story she asked him if that was really true. A and Z said it was true and Z said she did this all the time. Z was confused that this was news to anyone and when she asked her where she let the deposit go she said usually just her stomach.

"Well that's absolutely disgusting what are you, a savage?"

"No."

"Well what do you use to clean it up?" Z was appalled.

"Underwear?"

A butt in and condemned her for not being a towel girl.

"If a guy gets toilet paper now that's just insulting. You

should dump him immediately because he has no respect for you."

She had never been offered toilet paper.

"Personally I'm a sock guy."

It was true that guys had a lot of sperm but it was nothing compared to the audacity of the signature on the painting. Josh Smith or Picasso or Courbet's red signature. When a woman orgasms there is no explosive cum, or at least, she had never experienced that. The female orgasm was maybe something akin to neo-expressionism... like everything and nothing. Trying to find the female orgasm was maybe like trying to find value where there might just be none to find. It was maybe like a problem she thought about with art.

The best art must find value where there was none before.

Paul Chan said this in an online zoom lecture to a class of MFA students at a program to which she had applied and been rejected. The talk was about art and irreconcilability and advertising. "WHO made that." He said this alot, with an emphasis on the who.

The best work has no potential audience. The best work was fucked up in a fucked up way. When you don't know what you are looking at it is only then when it becomes truly worth looking at. A lot of art these days is just advertising. Basically it boiled down to objective or rather agenda. In politics, as in advertising, there are winners and losers. And there is analysis of outcome. What is the projected outcome? How does the goal get met? What are the statistics?

$TOP GIVING A $HIT ABOUT WHETHER YOU $HOULD OR $HOULD NOT GET VA$$ED. $TOP GIVING A $HIT WHETHER OR NOT YOUR $$$ UCK. IT PROBABLY DOE$ AND ALL OF THI$ JU$T TOP YOU FROM $EEING THE BIGGER I$$UE$ AND YTEM$ WE ARE DEALING WITH WHICH IS CAPITALI$ZM.

Chapter 7

Real Estate

To paint big implied there would be somewhere to put it when finished. Was it confident to paint big? It was confident to paint small. Small little kitchen paintings, that'd be nice. D had done paintings of raisins on raisins. JUST THE REAL ESTATE IN NY. She had shoplifted a few from his studio. Would one call it shoplifting? All of her paintings ended up in the dumpster. That was funny. She wanted to see a show of dumpster paintings. For now, it was shows as seen on see-saw. Andre Butzer, Nel Aerts, whatever was on at the gallery. Susan Cianciolo at Overduin. The room bisected by the runway. In one of the first iterations of RUN, Cianciolo laid cardboard down in the parking lot, just like that. At the show, after the show, everything was back "on" the walls. Or a little removed from the walls. Were clothing racks apart of walls? At REDCAT with D was where the idea was born.

"I'm over it. We might as well incorporate into the system and sell out. Just have a fashion show. The clothes are more affordable than the paintings. Just kidding. The paintings could go for 50 bucks. I want to be a corporation of 1."

Oehlen. Wanna talk about real estate? 3 shows in 2 months. Sizes at 177 5.8 x 135. Paintings so big they were in 2 parts. With footprints: some a little too gimmicky for her liking. *He just doesn't want to walk around the perimeter, eh?* Why was it that short distances were often the most challenging. Shortcuts, like shoplifting, made you feel how, exactly? It was all over the place. On the back, on the front, where was the subject going? A painter she worked for once called her and asked her to clean the foot prints from the paint-

ings because A BIG COLLECTOR IS COMING. What we do here is very very serious.

Chapter 8

If you flip a quarter there is a 50 percent chance it will land on heads and a 50 percent chance it will land on tails. Everything is luck, everything is arbitrary. Who's lives are you in the hands of, anyways? *Some kid who got his MFA at some bullshit school and then met M who wanted to fuck him and so he hired him directly out of grad school and put him on as gallery director. He doesn't know a thing about anything.* How about that! How many times would this come up.

It probably mattered most whether or not she ate that loaf of bread because sex does sell. No one seemed to care though. It didn't seem to be the case that people cared that every large-scale capital industry was run on the blood of young girls. It didn't seem to be the case that anyone cared that Jeffrey Epstein was murdered. It didn't seem to be the case that anyone cared that Julian Assange was in a glass box. Her father, a journalist who worked at a centrist organization, told her he wouldn't be extradited on account of his mental health. But *according to the defense, US prisons have lower suicide rates than UK prisons*.

Was there simply nothing left to do besides paint Bill Clinton in a blue dress? Maybe there was nothing left to do than to buy a print of a painting of Bill Clinton in a blue dress. Where could she find a copy... well the dress or the painting? Saatchi's google link was broken.

Sometimes the fingers move so fast you don't realize that you're hitting command plus t and typing: Prada sport vintage 90s Prada less than Prada sport boots bubble sole Miu Miu. What

were the clothes of this climate? They were something like…airport clothes. *I don't pay attention to the news, I don't pay attention to the weather.* The last time she got excited about the weather she was at a dinner and those she was speaking to looked at her and didn't say anything. Then one of them said, who the hell invited you. But couldn't there be a way to talk about the weather? A bathing suit with sleeves might imply that it was freezing and the city was underwater.

A short play. *This play is set in Los Angeles during January 2022. 1 and 2 are at the RH opening milling about. 1 has just gotten back to town from abroad.*
1: Absolutely I am going to dress myself in three blazers and a pair of suede work pants.
2: Be careful, it's raining way more in LA.
1: I live in Los Angeles but I have AC and working windows in my car. At night I only have a space heater and sometimes I have to lie on top of it to gather warmth. When I take phone calls I feel important because I'm wearing the 3p suit. I don't take many phone calls but you get the idea.
END

Monica Lewinsky was a fashion designer and had a line of handbags that sold at Bendels but The Real Monica Inc is a URL linked to an Indonesian site that gives out online gambling tricks with the most recent article being Methods for Choosing a Reliable Online Poker Site. "Entertainment", it reads, "comes in many forms and one of them is called online poker. This one is different from the regular land bets. That's because you need to create an account and login to the website before placing bets on some games. Well, popularity is increasing. Likewise the number of sites you can find on the internet."

The only way she'd be able to afford anything she wanted to buy such as Prada paint paintings paperbacks would be if she invest-

ed all her money in the stock market or in Cryptocurrency. She could try her hand at poker. *Winning the genetic lottery really comes down to the question of whether you're one of those people who eats when they're stressed verses one of those people who looses their appetite and if you're the latter it's smooth sailing because technically its not an eating disorder so people can't come down on you for that. And you know, theres just only so much real estate in…well...it's the city baby! you better slim down because we don't have the room!*

There were many reasons why and where she should and could slim down: 1. I just don't like paint anymore! I am oppressed by paint. There are too many colors here and so I am going to stop using any of them. 2. I bought all these damn square stretchers that don't make any sense because I don't want to make abstract fucking square ass paintings so I'm just gunna slim down the profile. 3. Why the fuck aren't you using a projector you know you could just project this shit and cut the time, like, in half. Or by like, 90%. Buy a mother fucking project. 4. Why the hell do you sand your canvases? I don't sand have never sanded a day in my goddamn life lemme tell you what. what the fuck are you sanding for watch a goddamn tutorial on how to paint youtube it you dumb bitch. 5. You could like, cut half of this content out, and you'd be saying the same thing. Edit! 6. I think you should just stop doing everything you are doing because I don't know what the hell it is that you are doing.

The art world was no longer (was it ever?) one community fighting over a dominant ideology, but rather a series of empires, structures, each with their own ideologies. Each gallery an island, each painter an island, and each island made up of chipboard. The islands were in the city. But what was the city? This seemed to be of grave concern and there were many options. (A by no means complete list of cities in the world: Abu Dhabi, Albany, Aleppo, Albuquerque, Alessandria, Algiers, Amarillo, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Athens, Atlanta, Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Boulder, Boston, Bridgeport, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Chicago, Dakar, Delhi, Detroit, Dubai,

Düsseldorf, Edmonton, Flagstaff, Gaza City, Hamburg, Istanbul, Jersey City, Johannesburg, Kabul, Kansas City, Kassel, Kyoto, Lisbon, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, CDMX, Miami, Montréal, Moscow, Mumbai, Munich, New York, Oslo, Pasadena, Perth, Port-au-Prince, Quito, Rotterdam, Santiago, São Paolo, Sydney, Tbilisi, Tel Aviv, Tijuana, Tokyo, Utrecht, Vancouver, Warsaw, Yonkers, Zürich.)

Chapter 9

The New City

Have you heard about the new city? The new city, the new city. Let me tell you about the new city. The apartment I stayed in opened up into this little side street with linoleum flooring. I mean it, the whole sidewalk was linoleum-tiled. Well A and I were on our way to see a movie but we stopped at the mall because A wanted to get perfume for the magazine opening. He said, let me show you this mall, it's insane. Have you ever been to a mall not inside America?

This mall, it was, well, it was like any other mall. We just went inside and A bought his Jo Malone perfume. At one point we got separated from each other and I ended up looping the rotunda seventeen times. I was about to give up and go to the market when I saw A from a distance, he was drowning in a sea of button downs. I was like, A, this city isn't anything new. He then turned to me and said people need to sell stuff. The return to painting is salable. But we can't just blame the market. People aren't weird anymore, have you noticed that? The average 9-5er is so much stranger than anyone in the art world. If people were weirder that would help. People should just let it all out, generally. But also specifically. If you run a gallery, let it out. Don't hold it inside. That's why I got famous, or noticed, because I didn't give a fuck and obviously there were bridges I burned but these people, they need to hear it! this shit sucks. Sorry but people are too polite. The show sells so it must have been a hit, well no! That's wrong! And then I cut in and said, but it's not the gallery's fault, it's the people. You could show them dribble and they wouldn't care. People don't really look anymore. I've been trying to figure it out, if it's this city, or maybe it's every city, where people just

don't care what they are looking at anymore, and A interrupted me. No, you're wrong. It's not in this city. People in this city care. That's why I live here. And that's when I realized, this new city wasn't a city at all. A was the only one who lived here.

And so A bought his Jo Malone perfume and we exited the mall. There was a torrential downpour outside. We called a car but it never showed up, or maybe it did but we missed it. We ended up walking which wasn't too far and the exercise felt good. It was nice to move the legs after grazing. The movie sucked and neither of us spoke the language but there were two lines of subtitles, Spanish and English, so we understood the plot. Afterwards we got fish which wasn't very good because we were so far inland and the fish wasn't fresh. Walking back through the carpeted streets I asked A if he thought everyone was going to move to this city. People already have moved here and left. That's why this is the new city. The new city, I told him, was inside your phone.

Chapter 10

Emails

Date: 28 August 2021 2:43 AM
From: <informationnewspaper@gmail.com>
To: <she@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: how do I get a copy?

you gotta be quicker

Information newspaperI
@informationnewspaper

On Fri, Aug 13, 2021 at 9:27 PM Contact form for she <informationnewspaper@email.bigcartel.com> wrote: From: She (she@gmail.com)

The following message was sent using your Big Cartel contact form at informationnewspaper@gmail.bigcartel.com
---
hi how do i get a copy? is everything completely sold out and i must wait for the next issue?

thanks
She

Date: 10 July 2021 7:18 AM
From: <peaceandpirates@gmail.com>
To: <ilikesnakes@gmail.com>, <mbradley@yahoo.com>, <paint-paintpaint@hotmail.com>, <cb123456789@gmail.com>, <lmnop@gmail.com>, <bush@gmail.com>, <zachsmalls45@gmail.com>, <seezan@gmail.com>, <jk123@gmail.com>, <neorushay@gmail.com>, <prada@hotmail.com>, <fuckemailing@gmail.com>
Subject: Let my wallet :((((((

Hi guyz fun to hang tonight! Would you mind taking a look for my wallet - a kind of small plastic patterned pouch - if you're there tomorrow? Xoxo

---

Chapter 11

Pick a day of the week, any day was every day. It was raining outside, a weird thing in this city. MOVE IT! A storm. A storm for the ship out at sea. Canvases blowing up to the size of boat sails. Paint like New York or get lost. Who let you on this boat? If each gallery was an island, each painter an island, the staff were the motorboats shuttling to and fro. On each boat was a flurry of pink silk and advanced wifi. If you pulled up the pant leg there it was, the wifi-router. He liked all the germans too. Maybe I will get a job at a gallery, just kidding I would never get hired at a gallery why not...why not? (After much hesitation although it was quite obvious)...because I don't dress like a gallery girl! What do you mean. I just wouldn't be able to fill that post. Well all you need is to get a pair of Carhartts. What are you talking about? Oh, you mean, like a prepator? No they don't hire girls for that kind of work, you have no idea how many times I have applied to be an art handler and I'm incredibly qualified it's so funny. At this point the tone turned nasty.

Maybe if you got a job you wouldn't be so concerned with what to paint because you'd be so exhausted that you wouldn't have any time at all to think about it you'd start painting all the things that made you sane, like...

Chapter 12

In the studio she was finding that 72 x 72 inches wasn't working. It was because that stupid square was too definitive of an abstract space already, so the rectangle, the thin rectangle, that was working. It was like when you pull something apart in your hands like a breaded mozzarella stick or when water shoots out of a hose that the thumb has blocked off…well these are two different feelings of the rectangle but maybe they could both come together. 72 x 72 was becoming 72 x 52, x 50, x 36, could she dare go to 24. The format almost made no sense, which married well with the comments that she usually got which were along the lines of: how did you arrive here at these colors? They make absolutely no sense.

Yes how did this happen? How did any of this happen? She was dying to know! She was dying to scream you think you are confused you've been in here for ten minutes how do you think it feels to be in here eight hours a day seven days a week I am loosing my fucking mind!

D had recently made a few thin rectangular canvases but that was because he had screwed up the dimensions of the stretchers. She was standing in his studio when he was doing the math and then she had to leave him alone because he was realizing he had spent the whole entire day building the wrong size. A thin stretcher was too elongated for portraiture, rather it was like a mural for an odd wall. A big odd wall. A pristine wall with a warped canvas. Big was comical. Phallic. She was tired of that word. Everything might as well be phallic. The museum. Outside. Her car. Big was male. Big also

wasn’t male. It was boring to talk about men. It was convenient to talk about men. It was convenient to blame others. It was convenient to blame society. What was more interesting was narcissism. Maybe that too was male.

Chapter 13

A short play. *This play is set on a bench in DTLA in January 2022.*
1 and 2 are sitting on a bench splitting a sandwich.
1: Listen, there's not any new avenues in painting, like all the moves have been made. There's nothing left to do except irony and sincerity
2: I don't believe in sincerity
1: O I do but that's cool I guess
1 begins to laugh
2: I mean I believe in sincerity but I just don't trust that everyone operates under a standard definition of it. Everyone has their own agenda and it's driven by personal gains
1 rolls his eyes
2: Come on that's true! Personal gains don't always have to equate to monetary value, like for instance, what we deem as selfless acts also fall into this category. Nothing is unconditional. Sure I help my friend out because I love them but what is love driven by? I want to continue to receive and grow that love. It is a mutually beneficial relationship. I listen to them when they are in despair but they also listen to me. I receive some sort of gratification knowing that I am able to help. If something is suffering, the instability plagues me and I work at it because I want it to heal. Or in a more general sense, we help our community because the wholeness of it serves everyone. Something with a sore affects us all even if we cannot directly feel it. On a more personal level, when that relationship, as in all relationships, no longer serves me, I will not participate in it. This is human nature and it absolutely applies to the way artists configure painting. What is the most vile is when someone tries to market it as selfless,

or disguises the gain, or whatever adjective comes to mind, I guess what I'm talking about is performative ally-ship. I remember over the summer of 2020 all these white people started posting on Facebook about how regretful they were of their actions, past actions or were coming to terms with how they were racist, they were going to make up for everything in a Facebook post. It's like that is still the same shit, taking the issue and re-centering it on yourself when it's not about you. Just like shut the fuck up and listen. It's the same shit all these gallerists and institutions are doing. Don't people realize that?

END

Chapter 14

In a recent studio visit, a gallerist (who had come at the request of the institution) had asked her what was accounting for the size of her stretchers bars and she had just lost it and said *because this is just what I have*. The gallerist stumbled back as if knocked over by a gust of wind and said to her *well ok that is not going to cut it*. He stood up straight and got out.

Two of the 72x72 she had sold to D but the rest were sitting in the hallway. How could she repackage this as something workable? She would gesso the size she wished she had.

Chapter 15

pull apart and recomposed in order to locate the intensity of a shared experience, rather than producing one more documentary version of the programmed and hyper-mediatized banality of everyday life. We can do this by a form of address via aesthetic/image disjunctions…… cheap image, cheap effects and cheap labor (if I do all the sewing). What was the declaration? Well I declare my own exile from a biopolitical space-time where nothing ever happens. We are living in a crisis which announces the sudden return of history but without characters or a story and of a politics without subjects. Capitalism encourages the cult of the self. Capitalism encourages imposter syndrome. Capitalism wants me to be anti-capitalist
I refuse the representational politics of the official Left
I am living post 03/07/2020 in a period of doubt, reflection and heightened security measures worldwide which sounds familiar. This is just fucking Groundhog Day… 20 year cycles……. What would it look like to become a fashion anarachist? Traditionally there is the black bloc, but what about for the every day? All refusals are co-opted by fashion. Is there a way to get rid of aesthetics. How to become a fashion anarchist? If the paintings were gesso and graphite and canvas, three colors, that would be an aesthetic but it would work to cancel…something…it would work to cancel the paint?

Or maybe, the real cancelation is the ultimate deterioration of itself through it's non-fixture

Chapter 16

A short play. *This play is set in Los Angeles December 2021.*
S is outside on the sidewalk, sitting on the curb, smoking, talking on the phone to D
S: Maybe I am just a conceptual painter. I am a performance painter. I am having an emotional existential crisis
D: I mean what do you expect us all to be at this godforsaken place. The important thing is that we keep on painting
END

Chapter 17

this morning I wrote a section on anarchism and fashion and literally transferring that to fabric caused me to delete the document as a whole, which is so fun. So now, instead of the writing dictating the paintings and the clothing, the paintings and the clothing dictate the writing, because they are literally my only hard copies

Chapter 18

A short play. *This play is set in D's studio, Los Angeles, February 2022.*

D: technostraction

S: I haven't heard of that what is that

D: it's the new trend in painting. I just coined it

END

Chapter 19

Legibility was a hot word, or a word that kept coming up in the painting and in general. Studio visits were the main site.

For example, in one studio visit it would be agreed upon that her painting was illegible and therefore not serving the narrative or, in other words, the content. It was confusing painting, it was bad painting, it was not bad painting in a good way but bad painting in a bad way.

The following visit (and this could be as soon as mere seconds) the conclusion would be, again, that the painting was illegible but rather than being at odds to it as a whole, the illegibility was not only pleasant but preferable.

She had no idea how to digest any of this information except to take in the one thing which was for certain which was that her painting was incredibly illegible.

The paintings she had been working on were graphite on gessoed canvas and they were text paintings of a novella she was writing. The font, which was the source of this sense of "illegibility" was an old english gothic font ripped from the internet by a user who went by the name Kingthings and titled the font "Kingthings Spike". Their rating was 4.6/5.0 with 18 votes. They had no license or rather, no information available regarding a license. When she clicked the hyperlink that was the author's name it brought her to a URL "kingthingsfonts.co.uk" which was up for purchase.

She found it funny that what was pretty important, but that no one seemed to care about in these studio visits, was that the font was ripped from the internet. She always said "the font is ripped

from the internet" and not one single person stopped her after that. It was similar to those youtube to MP3 converters, or the days of Pirate Bay, which was still in operation. Maybe what she could do would be to just download her paintings directly from somewhere and she would do it too except there wasn't enough storage available on her laptop. Sometimes all she wanted to talk about was liquid assets and credit scores and renting instead of I just can't read the damn thing.

Well everything here is rented. Her studio was becoming an exit through the gift shop. If you cannot afford the paintings, take the novel. Better yet take a picture of the novel and read it as a jpg. Her parents couldn't get divorced because they had to pay the house off. But I, she thought, will live in an apartment forever. The pros of rent were that movement was possible, flexibility was possible.

You change your shoes like you change your city like you change your apartment like you change your paintings like you change the water in your fishes bowl. You get on the plane and you just go. Trauma? Boredom? Escapable through finance. You have two cell phones, one for Spectrum and one for life. How many people did she know that skipped out on payments?

L had told her that someone he knew, who was not a painter but did something involving economics, was saying something to him about credit and student debt or maybe it was the national debt or, something greater than a singularity, affecting individual credit, something about wiping it all out, it wasn't a political platform, my god it wasn't anarchism, but maybe the inverse, it was something about the numbers becoming too large or overwhelming, there were a lot of ellipses when he was describing it to her, but it ended with a kerfuffle or maybe it was rather a consensus by the painter himself that was stemmed from this unknown economics source that "do not pay off your student loans". Or maybe it was a New Yorker article. She was a little drunk but also pretty sober but there was no difference really because it was one of those situations that sobers you up by the sheer force of intellect being shoved at you and her head was

quickly trying to do the math of the equation on the imaginary white-board that was her mind. It doesn't add up! This meant it was time to go.

That was the night she ran into A where he basically announced to her friends that they were fucking, casually of course. Her mouth dropped wide open and she couldn't formulate sentences. Eventually he left when she began talking again and it had become apparent that what was coming out of her mouth was a rumination on how the tables were so low to the ground: what were they doing anyways and who were they really serving? When A heard this he abruptly went to find his friends or to find beer or something not art and not idiot-affiliated. GOD SPEED she wanted to shout after him because they were at a party in a parking lot of studios.

Chapter 20

The Waiting Room

You find yourself in a wide, low, straggling entry with old-fashioned wood paneling. On one side hangs a very large oil-painting so thoroughly bestowed, and every way defaced, that in the unequal cross-lights by which you view it, it is only by diligent study and a series of systematic visits to it, and careful inquiry of the neighbors, that you find you could any way arrive at an understanding of its purpose. Such unaccountable masses of shades and shadows that at first you almost thought some ambitious young artist, in the likeness of the New England hags, had endeavored to depict chaos bewitched. But by dint of much and earnest contemplation, and repeated ponderings, and especially by frantically throwing open the little window at the back of the entry, you at last come to the conclusion that such an idea, however wild, might not be altogether unwarranted.

But what most puzzled and confounded you was a long, limber, portentous, black mass of something hovering in the center of the picture over fluorescent green, dim, perpendicular lines floating in a nameless soup. A boggy, soggy, squitchy picture truly, enough to drive a coked up man to silence. Yet was there a sort of indefinite, half-attained, unimaginable sublimity about it that fairly froze you to it, till you involuntarily took an oath with yourself to find out what that marvelous painting meant by all means necessary. Occasionally a bright, but, alas, deceptive idea would dart through you. — It's the East River in a midnight moon! — It's the unnatural combat of the four primal elements! — It's a blasted Manhattan. — It's seconds after dipping one foot into that black slick glass of city slush from the curb. — It's the breaking-up of the ice-bound stream of time. But all

these fantasies yielded to that one portentous something in the picture's midst, that, once found out, made all the rest plain. But stop; does it not bear a faint resemblance to a gigantic ILLEGIBLE*? even the great* ILLEGIBLE*?*

In fact, the artist's design seemed this: a final theory of my own, partly based upon the aggregated opinions of many aged persons with whom I conversed upon the subject mediated by a thick haze of smoke. The picture represents a city in a great hurricane; the half-foundered ship weltering there with its zillions of dismantled masts alone visible; and an exasperated mass, purposing to spring clean over the scape, is in the enormous act of impaling itself upon the zillion mast-heads.

Chapter 21

Rachel Harrison at Regen Projects “Caution Kneeling Bus”
January 15 - February 20, 2022

At Rachel Harrison’s opening at Regen Projects, exiting the back left room which held both *Coffee Cup* and *YouTube*, the security guard told me in a tone driven by either surprise or relief (I couldn’t tell which but most likely both) that I hadn’t taken the coffee cup. *Coffee Cup* held a coffee cup. He was correct, I hadn’t taken it. I asked him if that was what people had been doing, removing the run-of-the-mill take-out coffee cup with a cardboard sleeve from the sculpture and bringing it to him. He said yes.

“People think someone left that coffee cup there!”

“How many times has that happened.”

“About five in the past half hour.”

I rejoined L, to whom I explained the exchange. It seemed to me that this was the crux of the show.

There are of course more overtly “precarious” situations scattered throughout the gallery: New Balances wedged under and possibly “propping up” a sculpture, an aluminum gallon-can serving as a third leg for the sculpture’s swollen wattle or ballsack, an obstacle course made of para cord and zip ties with printer paper binder-clipped to it. The latter is the most extreme as viewers are, though not explicity told to do so, seemingly aware of the fact that they can climb around and through the installation in order to investigate the thing itself. It is an amalgamation of information (images, lists, fragments of transcribed interviews and objects) loosely related to the

events of January 6, 2021. There's a six pack of Coor's light outlined with tape. The agenda is seemingly no explicit agenda.

In the Q&A portion of a conversation with Hamza Walker to close the exhibition, Harrison asked the gallery girl to tell us, the audience, an anecdote of her days working the show. Again it was the tale of the coffee cup: gallery-goers had been coming up to the front desk to inform her that they believed someone had left it accidentally on the artwork and were wondering if she would like them to remove it for her? The girl, like the security guard, had to clarify that the cup was meant to be there. Harrison was getting a kick out of this confusion.

In a 2005 Artforum article, "Stop Painting Painting", on Michael Krebber John Kelsey wrote:

"For New Yorkers, Krebber is first of all something overheard, a rumor—maybe too good to be true. He's a story told by others (Germans, mostly) to each other. The story has no point and no end. It might begin with Krebber eating a beer glass at another painter's opening in order not to say something about it, or with him suddenly instructing his students never to paint again."

We can reformat this and apply it to Harrison:

"For viewers (is there a city at play here?), Harrison's sculptures are first of all something overheard, a rumor—maybe too good to be true. They've got a story told by others (the gallery girl, the security guard, ect.) to each other. The story potentially has a punchline but it has no end. It might begin with *Coffee Cup* undergoing a traumatic loss repeatedly at it's own opening in order for others not to have to say something about it, or with the gallery girl, prompted by Rachel, recounting the fact that viewers need to inform her someone left a coffee cup on *Coffee Cup* (it is unclear if they've made the connection between object and title)."

Harrison's sculpture has a formula that relies on concrete social relations and systems within the artworld. There will always be viewers who bite just as there will always be an Ellsworth Kelly

for *Day's Grape* to potentially spray when one of the cans explodes. She is the prankster who sets this up, just as she positioned a mic to the side of *Medicine Ball* on the night of the conversation with Hamza. Of course *Medicine Ball* doesn't speak because it's a sculpture and Rachel is clear that the mic "is not apart of the work." She's just having a laugh.

Chapter 22

She found D grazing near where RH was packing up. D wanted to ask RH a question about a piece she had done in the late 90's: *20 x 24" (for CDL)*, a white structure, typical in the vein of RH, cleated to the wall and housing (on one of the structure's shelves) a framed photograph of viewers looking at Gustave Courbet's 1866 *The Origin of the World* at the Musee d'Orsay. On the front of the assemblage was a board that read "$50.00 BET". What was the bet? D was asking RH by the time she made her way over.

What ended up happening was this. She, a long-time fangirl of RH, had lost her ability to formulate a complete sentence and was, instead of engaging like a normal human being, standing awkwardly at a 45 degree-angle to the pair. D, sensing her on the periphery, interrupted himself to introduce her, to at which point RH said hello, picked back up her train of thought with D, and then interrupted the conversation again to ask if she was ok and if they needed to go.

"She looks like she wants to leave."

She was mortified. She laughed and said no. RH, digesting the situation, went back into her story but not without a suspecting eye on her.

Well the story didn't continue much longer because CO interrupted. D never ended up finding out what the $50.00 bet was. It was probably not on purpose. RH didn't seem protective about the information.

Chapter 23

When we find ourselves laughing, do we applaud the painter? What does it mean to be a true rebel? Well the punk aesthetic has been commodified. It is wrapped up neatly in a bow for us. The most punk thing you can do is get people to put those white booties on. THE MOST PUNK THING YOU CAN DO IS ACTUALLY HANG IT AT 63 INCHES UP FROM THE GROUND AND CENTERED.

Chapter 24

Rachel Harrison in conversation with Hamza Walker at Regen Projects
6570 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90038
February 16, 2022, 7 PM - 9 PM

Rachel Harrison: venus has a head and I know it because it's in my studio
RH: oh that's venus…reverse image search

Hamza Walker: do you feel threatened by arbitrariness?
RH: no, oh no no, everything here is very specific

RH (on a work of art having many entry points): you could enter the piece and say "green"

RH: titles literally describe, things are as they seem

RH: high low

RH: im loosing it I never had it Shaun who is in charge here

RH: theres no celebrities here except for maybe in the other room

RH (on the purposefulness of the dinner party): because maybe at one point they all read the same book or listened to/liked the same music

Chapter 25

Date: 20 January 2022 9:16 AM
From: <she@gmail.com>
To: <office@regenprojects.com>
Subject: rachel harrison

Hi Regen projects,

wondering if you could kindly send over a price list + check list for the Rachel Harrison show?

thank you

s

Date: 20 February 2022 10:10 AM
From: <she@gmail.com>
To: <office@regenprojects.com>
Subject: rachel harrison

Hi regen projects, do you have a check list of the rachel harrison show you could please send over? im also wondering what the title of this wall work is (attached). thank you

<Screen Shot 2022-02-20 at 10.04.55 AM.png>
s

Chapter 26

Dinner

For dinner V picked up food from that restaurant right off the 2 for twenty people, give or take. The whole event was scheduled around the closing of the show and held at the house in the hills: “a dinner for the artists”. There were two menus, as usual. The first menu was paella, one vegetarian and one seafood. She spent most of the night in the kitchen making a salad with materials from Trader Joe’s: some sort of bagged lettuce, olive oil with lemon and salt for dressing, pine nuts (V was very into these), avocado and quite possibly a nut though it was so long ago it was hard to remember. *On her feet she seemed so small and incredibly slight. The pinned bangs, the short hair, dressed like a child in a black turtleneck and a blue sweater-vest, she obviously didn’t look her age. Her clumsiness was calculated: S wasn’t making a salad but chaos, ostensibly. Initially this was to give her a chance to fail, either by exposing the slightest domestic capacity, or by serving the guests rubbish. But nothing works better than a trap avoided. The detachment S is capable of when making water run, or finding a serving fork, or the missing cutting-board necessary for the carrots, or the knob correlated to the burner, would slyly distance her from the group discussing obscure painters at the table. The salad never got served.* Beer. The second secret menu, though it was not really a secret if you were a fully-functioning human being, was house in the hills, minimal parking, outdoor space, long table, candles, job of importance, beer.

Chapter 27

The Dinner Guest

O sat at the head of the table, too, it so chanced; as cool as an icicle. To be sure I cannot say much for his breeding. His greatest admirer could not have cordially justified his bringing his brushes and Liquitex palette knives to dinner with him, and using them there without ceremony; first, reaching over the table with a painting knife no. 13, to the imminent jeopardy of many heads, and slicing the beefsteaks, and then a large painting spatula no. 2, as a sort of trowel to shovel and deliver the meat to him. Though most gawked, it was certainly very coolly done, and every one knows that in most people's estimation, to do anything coolly is to do it genteelly.

Chapter 28

Interlude

The best thing she saw at Frieze Los Angeles 2022 which was not at Frieze but on instagram was two frozen frames of L with her back to the camera facing the pink facade with both her middle fingers up.

Chapter 29

Streetwear

They are driving back from the west side. He grew up in the city, had lived in multiple cities, and had in fact moved back to the city. They eventually wind up in a small restaurant in a strip mall. They sit in the way back at a table for four people although it's just the two of them. He orders a beef broth soup. After a long silence he speaks up.

"Sometimes I just think I should start a streetwear brand."

Later, though the moment had passed and she didn't think it mattered to bring it up again, she found herself thinking *wait I'm literally doing just that*.

Chapter 30

"Are you sleeping with me or with them?"

"Often with them. Most of the time it is them."

"But they aren't even in the same city as us."

"Nothing that I don't know."

In other news B kicked a hole in my bedroom door on Thanksgiving, I dumped my indie rocker boyfriend on FaceTime after he ignored me for two weeks, S is threatening to sue me after I quit and it's not that I'm you know worried about that so much but you know she's been threatening me over Linkedin, which is crazy because I didn't even know I had an account. Long story short I'm staying in the apartment alone for the holidays but I finally got on Raya. I went on one date with a hot boy who turns out to have a weird obsession with giraffes and asparagus. He's a good kisser and all but I don't think I'll be seeing him again. Sometimes I call him up because he's got a massive dog and I think what I really need now is TWO bodies to sleep next to…the last time he slept over the dog was ass-to-facing me and kept farting…he was like I'm so sorry and I was like he can't help it he's a dog. I think I'm a robot without any emotions. I don't even really know if I like having sex anymore.

He hesitated before hitting her below the belt.

"But what about the girl he's sleeping with…"

"She's like you. We don't care about you two."

"It's not true!" He was losing control of himself. "He loves her, and besides, you'll always have her between you. I've seen that for a long time."

She was silent for a moment.

"Didn't it ever occur to you," she said finally, "that maybe I want her too?"

Chapter 31

Outside on the terrace she was smoking with A when the door burst open and out came D.

"I've figured it out, I've figured it all out." She and A were silent as they looked at him from a distance.

"I'm going to take the mailboxes off the wall and put them in my studio and that will be the work."

They continued to take long drags on their cigarettes as they both stared at him and watched the merriment run down from his face not unlike water sliding down a window.

"The what?"

"The mailboxes on this wall that no one uses."

"I don't understand."

"It's a stupid idea. Forget it."

A was giddy. "That was so cute!"

D went back inside.

We don't know when the idea began but it probably began over a text message conversation between the two of us something about pening a gallery despite being a a socialist, that's in quotations... it was originally going to be a dinner party series where we would have critiques sort of centered around this idea of kids getting together to do a crit group that existed outside of the institution which was something I used to do in Brooklyn before covid hit and it was a really magical thing, all theses young serious artists who really want to talk about art people are really just starved for community, so anyways D and I figured we would have these crits centered around

the dinner table maybe, well the idea was discusssed for some time, we were going to call it "Soup" and it was going to be a monthly thing in rotational spaces. Your ticket to the dinner was your work, so if you wanted to eat you had to prove it I guess. The acronym was something like serving (h)ors d'oeurves and your paintings but the your would be spelled with a u. D had figured out that John Baldessari's house was for sale in Santa Monica for 4 million dollars, so as you can tell we were really investing a lot into it. Well eventaully it devolved into just a gallery and I got obsessed with the name pirates, I'm pretty insistent on the fact that it's italicized and has an exclamation point at the end of it, like Pirates! it makes me think of like some musical coming to town or something. Like a very very low budget musical and all the stage design would be either like the dregs of the storage room or, I don't know it would look like a treehouse you had built when you were 7. D could dress up like Captain Hook and I would be probably be, I don't know, I'd be being some fascist in the corner quietly. Anyways I got really obsessed with this idea that Dave Hickey articulates quite well in his essay "Pirates and Farmers" where he says that, essentially, all human beings are either one or the other: they are either pirates or farmers. Farmers build fences and control land. Pirates tear down fences, cross borders, and pillage. Is not a successful artist but a pirate? I should note that successs here is not defined by economic value but of course you can committe acts of piracy at Blick, but even in your own studio. It's philosophical but it extends into the concrete and at the end of the day it really has something to do with how scrappy you are maybe. Like the other day I was in my studio and I needed two sets of cross braces for two 35 by 46 inch canvases and I was like well I can either take all this shitty wood that I have laying around my studio and apply a bit of discipline and work or I can just go to Blick. I was feeling depressed so I went to Blick even though I knew it was wrong and spent $50 on just two of the cross braces and when I went back to the studio I didn't even use them because it was so fucked up to me

and then I returned them so now the backing of those stretchers is just a total hodgepodge and it's correct. I mean I know how to build stretchers so it's right but it's like I could have stolen those stretchers from Blick but I don't think that would be a pirates thing to do either. It's not about money or time, piracy isn't about being good or bad, it's more about following an internal independence. So anyways, back to Pirates!, I was really obsessed with this idea of having a pirate gallery. The thing is that we don't actually have a gallery. We have our first show, which is a painting show, it's a show of checklist paintings. It's other artist's paintings. So for example, I have the checklist from this fantastic Nel Aerts show that was at Nino Mier this past December and we were going to put one in from there, I'll probably sneak in a Chris Martin painting I saw at Frieze, definitely a work by Kim Dingle although my favorite thing at that show wasn't the paintings but that man sitting at the type writer transcribing the events in the gallery. Between the two of us we have enough checklists to really fill the space. It's really just paintings that we like and think are interesting and want to claim as our own, like, look! we have and can show a Jutta Koether even though we don't. In a way it's like claiming social proximity. D wants to frame all the paintings in artists frames that we would have to make, I wasn't concerned with that idea but then I realized the only way to communicate the painting's actual dimesions would be through the size of the frame since checklist images are relatively the same size. The other thing about the gallery is that we don't have a space but that's apart of it. We want it to rotate and be able to pop up in other galleries, maybe in-between shows, like we seige this! Here is our flag. Maybe we should get a flag. We don't have a flag. We don't even have a website. We just have all these conversations about the hypothetical gallery which may or may not actualize.

Chapter 32

Interlude

Here is my sunday aphorism: asking to see a painting in progress is like asking a chef to try is dish while it's being made.

Chapter 33

A few days later, he brought into her studio one of C's paintings. She complimented it: a small, abstract composition, not ugly, better at least than anything by Francois-J.

He, on the contrary, thought it was one of the most mediocre things he'd ever seen, which was worse than saying that it was just plainly bad painting. To be mediocre was to be unworthy of acknowledgement. He's harsher than her when it comes to art. But since he's also clear-headed, especially when he's not sober, she always comes around to his opinion. She had to admit that what jumped out first in C's painting was its pleasantly stylish derivative qualities, not bold blunders of genius. Of course pleasantly and stylish were not positives. But she rose to the absent girl's defense: novels and paintings follow whichever recipe is convenient at the moment. In any case, there's something to be said for cleverly using the cliches of one's time…

"But not in C's case," He said. "C is unconscious. In the world she was brought up in, a girl paints if she doesn't feel like writing. And she paints exactly like that. C is totally incapable of cleverness. She doesn't even know how to live. She's lost in the simplest things. She is afraid of everything."

He told her how the painting, regardless of its other qualities, was what had provoked the crisis between B and C. It went like this: C was staying with B because of the toxic atmosphere between Francois-J and M at her own apartment. B loved this painting. B immediately insisted that C either keep it or give it to her instead. In a desperate reaction, C had taken back her books and wasn't sleeping

in the attic anymore. Then, suddenly, Francois-J was mad at C too. So she didn't want to go back to her place anymore, where B, on the other hand, was always hanging out now. Most likely talking a lot of shit to Francois-J about C's immoral behavior. The painting, in the meantime, had wound up in the hands of G, who had delivered it to S at her studio. And such was how the two of them wound up in their present condition, standing in front of it judging it's worthiness.

"Well I don't want this trauma."

Chapter 34

A short play. *S and A are standing in S's studio, which is full of large green canvases. Los Angeles, November 2021.*
A: My friend was making all these paintings for her first solo show in NY and the gallerist went over to her studio to look at the paintings, and she was like…the whole show is green. Green paintings are the hardest to sell. And my friend told me this, and I had never heard that before, so I checked with my gallery and they were like, yeah, green paintings are the hardest to sell. I guess it's because it's the hardest to match with furniture.
S: I think the whole show is going to be green paintings.
Enter E and Z
E: R says green is the hardest to sell.
S: Has R said that? I don't understand this because green is my favorite color and how could green not look good in a home. I guess it makes sense because collectors have bad taste anyways.
Z: I thought it was brown. R told me the same thing and literally all I'm making is green paintings right now.
Enter A
A: I've never heard that it's green. I've heard that it's yellow
END

The unofficial press release, which a little later would be sent in an email in a tongue and cheek way to K, would read: green paintings show.

Chapter 35

February 25, 2022

Him speaking while wearing the same clothes are raising suspicion about when the decision was made to launch war. In a recorded address released Wednesday night he announced his decision to invade. But he was wearing the same suit and tie and sitting in the same position as he was during a speech released Monday. The videos have led some to speculate that he made up his mind earlier in the week to launch the attack. In both speeches he's slumped over and speaks belligerently. He has a very good wardrobe team.

Chapter 36

Sleep

L picks up the phone with a *HI S YES I CAN TALK OH THANK GOD YOU CALLED I AM SO HUNG OVER I WENT ON A DATE LAST NIGHT.*

What happened was this: My friend Joanna was like I have someone I want to set you up with and well it was her friend who I had just met. Like we had just met because he had come to my class and I was like oh it was him? And she was like yes what do you think and I guess she had already showed him photos of me before he came to the class and he was cute and all so I was like ok I'll give it a try so we end up going on this date, and we had texted a little bit back and forth and I was like yeah I don't really drink but he like, worked at a brewery or something, he like makes craft beer what no he lives on the Upper East Side so yeah I was like um well I don't really drink but I could be into going to a bar for like a sampling or whatever of this craft beer because he was pretty insistent about it or seemed really into it ya so we go to this bar, which isn't even it just ends up being some shitty sports bar on the Upper East Side, and I end up getting kind of drunk because obviously I don't drink I had like half a beer you know anyways we end up staying at this bar for like 5 hours all of a sudden it's 1 AM and he's like do you want to come over and I was like ok because I was feeling like I could have sex or at least try to fool around and so we get to his apartment which is like a studio apartment he lives on 77th and avenue A and anyways we start hooking up and I decide lets have sex so we do but his dick was so huge I actually had to stop I was like I can't do this, we had sex for like a second I got so overwhelmed and I just

had to stop and I just wanted to lay there I just realized I just wanted to sleep with someone, so we are there and it's nice until all of a sudden he starts getting these text messages from his brother who is in New Jersey, has been in New Jersey all this time it turns out and is like on his way over, it's 2:30 now, so all of a sudden the boy starts packing up my clothes and is like ok you have got to go I'm so sorry but my brother is coming over, I mean you can stay until he comes but you cannot sleep here which I guess made sense because he lived in a studio apartment there was quite literally nowhere for all of us to fit except the bed and what was going to happen he would like sandwich himself in the middle? So I'm like wait ok uhh and he's like I'm so so sorry what no yeah I mean, well he was apologetic but also he didn't really seem to care it was like normal I guess for him which was no not normal for me at all I'm like wait I understand that it's New York but my bed time is like 10 PM! I do not do this ever! anyways he's like, an Uber yeah, he's like do you want to split it, it was like 30 dollars back to Brooklyn well because I could take the FDR but I was like no umm it's ok I'll just pay for it. So I get home at like 3:15 he's like text me when you get home which I did yeah. you know I know it's normal sure but whatever I feel so crazy I woke up this morning so confused about I mean I don't even like going out to restaurants anyways oh god he's texting me right now about his day he just texted me I'm at a beer event drinking more beer what you up to he was wearing haha black like dickies or work pants, a black sweatshirt that said music in white text which I was like where did you get that yeah a fucking Supreme shirt underneath and loafers. And a cap. I don't understand at all.

Chapter 37

For some time, I had grown tired of my image. I began to find it sun-bleached and boring and I could not figure out what to do about it. So I texted A, who had an affinity for style, and who could possibly offer me a potential solution. I was convinced that the best way to renovate my persona would be through the adoption of a new uniform exclusively for an indefinite period of time and to be worn for all non-casual activities. I was excited about the potential for my mornings to become streamlined by not having to worry about what I would wear every day. A's decision was this: fashion with a capital F. The suit. Luxury streamlined. I asked him if he could suggest a place where I might purchase one. And what about fabric?

We've got it in cotton poplin, fleece, organic sweet pea gauze, satin, stretch lycra, stretch net, economy cotton, single jersey, classic poly, organic cotton sateen and soft velvet. As it stands now, none of the styles have buttons or button holes, any of the draw strings, some of the hems are not done and a lot of the pieces need to be pinned either for closure or for fit. But we will proceed.

Chapter 38

Potential business model for a* gallery

1. A company is now a group of people who raise capital to do whatever they want to do.
2. A company should not be expected to predict what it is going to be doing in six months because six months feels like a lifetime.
3. To be desirable, a company must be slightly unknowable. It must remain forever in a state of pure possibility.
4. The perpetual description: the gallery currently has no business operations.
5. Do nothing and intend to continue to do nothing.
6. Keep yourself new, a face lift every three months.
7. By doing nothing you have avoided ruling out the possibility of not doing something else.
8. Extremely limited assets and no source of revenue.

Chapter 39

The whole reason to have a site like this is to create some sort of narrative arch.

Chapter 40

She was pingponging ideas in the studio: 1. painting within the painting. This was bringing her back to four years ago in New York. She'd be walking up the wide staircase and all of a sudden TJ would zip around the corner. *Dude I am just setting up these spaces with paintings in the paintings.* He had taken a few tabs of acid. *I was just standing there listening to DM talk at my work going uhuh uhuh yea I am tripping out so hard.* But instead of painting within the painting it was painting the content of the novel. *Like you have to read the content to actually know what is going on. But it's literally all right there. It's not like some unknowable thing. Unless you cannot read english. Or unless the painting has been erased.* Keep the footprint painting, a type of collaborative painting in the sense that the painting is collaborative with the other paintings. She was really into Laura Owen's '95 paintings at Rosamund Felsen Gallery. *I would just have the painting in the studio with all these little blank canvases and people would come and paint one*. It was a great idea but it had already been done. Well all this collaborative painting had been done. *I will collaborate the novel with the paintings more.* Can the painting dictate the novel. Can the paintings just dictate the paintings?

Laura Owens gave a talk in March. *I was driving in the car listening to Pavement and I was thinking Pavement karaoke, pavement painting karaoke, could painting be painting pavement karaoke* and *could I make the painting the way a graphic designer at the newspaper would be doing* and *everything in the studio must go* and *ANAMORPHIC* which is distorted projection.

Chapter 41

A short play. *Set in Los Angeles, March 2022. 1 and 2 have just finished fucking. 1 is covered in cum, laying on the bed. 2 is walking around looking for something to give 1. 2 comes back with a wad of toilet paper. 1's mouth drops open.*

1: No

1: I don't want that

2 laughs and goes into the kitchen. 1 had not discussed with 2 what Z had said.

END

Chapter 42

*well if i dont have faxes what do i do i just either fake the faxes or i use other emails that dont have to do wjth the painting show maybe i print the school email correspondence about the show and put them up ***!!***maybe i start to incorporate more of the emails and correspondence around the paintings around the book back into the paintings ***!!!!!*******

No. It needs to be the other way around let the painting dictate the novel.

Chapter 43

Daylight will break early in the bedroom - the windows having been left open. The two of them lay side by side on their sides, 1 facing 2 and 2 facing the edge of the bed. They are misaligned. During the night 2 had slipped down towards the middle of the bed, curled up in a ball like someone who had never acquired the discipline to sleep in company, and consequently came to occupy a space in the bed which was limited but awkward both for them and 1. Now awake, 1 will take 2 by the armpits and hoist them up so they are once again level. 2, having woken slightly before or possibly right at the same time as 1, will yield to this in a manner not unlike a dead fish.

This space in between sleeping and being fully awake, of which both occupants (1 and 2) of the bed seem to be now settled in to, if only for a short while, allows for, if one knows how to access it, an incredible amount of information regarding one's feelings towards the other to pass. The route to take is through the tactful game. For instance 2 will play a relatively simple (yet holding an un-proportionate amount of stakes) game in which the only move is a physical advance away from 1 at small intervals. This in turn gauges how aware 1 is of 2's distance both physically as well as emotionally (however dishonest 2's actions may be). 1's next move, or lack there-of, not unlike a game of chess, is critical. Plainly put if 1 allows 2 to be, it can be deduced that 1 is not very interested in 2. Of course this can be parsed further by the distance to which 1 allows 2 to move in their inch-by-inch parade towards the lip of the bed as well as by the force to which 1 responds in their pull of 2 back (if 1 does so at all).

There is nothing sadder, if examined from an aerial view, of a person making micro movements away from the person next to them...to whom they had just been entwined with hours before... and this person next to them, aware of the separation increasing, not giving a shit. On the contrary, there is nothing lovelier, if again examined from an aerial view, of the sudden throwing over of the left arm to grip the body squarely, and the bend at the elbow inwards of the right arm (which has been wedged under the body from the night's sleep) and then the bend at the elbow of the left arm in order to interrupt and bring back this person who had been slowly trying to escape the grip.

And it is not without noting that this is of course all out the window if it is unbearably hot or if the night's sleep has been tortuous or if either 1 or 2 (in a preferable scenario both) are exhausted from a late night of sex and an early rise resulting in a well rounded, just not enough, amount of sleep.

Chapter 44

1. where is the painting
2. how much is painting and how much is advertisement for the novel
3. where and what is the content
4. is the content quite literally just the narrative the text is telling?

Painting is all these other things that are maybe not art like capital but you just have to go with it.

Chapter 45

Black Chapter

RS and ATKH are both 6 x 9 inch. RS came after ATKH.

It's just absolutely got to be Times New Roman font and the chapter number in the upper left quadrant of the page. Where to put the page number? Well it's not the same so take the one you want, fine. Font size appears to be size 11 although RS seems to be a bit more bold than ATKH. Fine. The leading has been arrived at 16pt which was determined by counting the number of lines on a single page of RS which amounted to 33 and then finding the closest on the indesign file. It's also 33. FINE. The margins are a bit off so it may be that it is not quite correct though it is pretty close. FINE. RS uses a roman numeral page numbering for the preface and publishing materials and then switches to numbers, ATKH begins with PAGE 1. OK. WHAT SHOULD I CALL IT? JUST CALL IT THE NOVEL. DIVIDE 4 IN HALF THAT MAKES 2. 2 IN HALF MAKES 1 CUT THE THE.

One time K and I went to the hardware store and bought a thin cable which we then jammed into the side of the door, manuevered and hooked the handle to pull. We had about 4 hours in there which was soured when we left to get sushi from the Japanese supermarket on 6th, because when we got back we let some guy in who seemed confused (but elated!) that the door was open. Well, it wasn't long before we got in trouble, up on the top floor in the MFA kitchen, eating our sushi, what the HELL are you two doing here, oh, well, you know we didn't mean anything serious, sorry, we didn't know it wasn't open...

K asked if he could finish his sushi which is what I think really pissed her off. Later we had all these meetings where they told us they had footage and that I wasn't in as much trouble as he was because he was the one who was prying the door open and didn't I just want to admit that I was forced into all of it? I said let me see the footage. Out it came on four wheels

The dark screen of the TV monitor seemed to accompany them constantly as they moved about the room. The cables didn't seem to be working. First it was the power cord, that wasn't long enough. One of them suggested they get a ruler, a little plastic clear thing that only measured a foot. It would just have to do. They measured the cord from the plug pins to the TV and then they measured the perimeter of the outlet and then they measured the cord from the TV to the plug which ended up being 3 inches too long.

"Well it doesn't fit. Yes it is a disaster. We will HAVE to get this sorted out. Come back later please."

Later on, once it was dark outside, and the wind was blowing gustily around the city rooftops, and there was nothing but the night approaching, I decided to pay A a visit. K had long abandoned me but I didn't really care.

"The building is closed, Miss."

I looked and saw the light on in A's window, 6 stories up. He was standing at the kitchen table alone. He was looking down, and I didn't come to understand why until he began to move, his arm grasping like a child for their mother's face. It was a black box with a large black bow that he picked up. I watched him watch it. Finally he opened the lid. Could he see me? He began to pull out yards and yards of black tissue paper. The whole of the box began to fill up his apartment. His spectacles fell off into a complex sea of black paper. The room was filling up like a washing machine. From the outside it seemed that A's demeanor was changing. He appeared giddy. I stood there very still. He knew he was going to die. Pure potentiality, timeless black desire. A kid playing in the black woods. A black pen

on black paper. A car vanishing down the Merritt Parkway. A black tire on fire. The city had lost electricity.

I began to think about the first time I met A, at a party surrounded by black chemical hair, shaved eyebrows and lip gloss. He wasn't speaking to anyone, but lounging on the couch, looking at his watch, planning his great escape.

I knew it was you from the moment I saw you. Young and ugly and beautiful and old. Everytime I see you I don't recognize who you've become, but I know your air. I know how to find you. I come back to you everytime I feel lost, wounded, sad and upset. Sometimes you don't really give me anything and I feel...the void. But it might just be that it wasn't the time, I close you and I say I'll try again later. There is always later, yes, there is always later...

I walk away from A. I walk towards the subway. I walk towards my car. The gas gauge is all wrong. I walk towards the store. I walk towards my phone. I walk towards the almonds in the fridge. I walk towards the sneakers in my closet. I walk towards the Picassos. I'm watching Gerald Kargl's *Angst* and it's become apparent that this movie is all about walking and speed. Well K just walks right out of prison! That's not unsual. Because K can walk quite fast he is able to move through the forest and escape trouble. This is also how he happens upon the house. He just breaks the window and walks inside. Unfortunately the two victims arrive in a car. This is their grave mistake. When K strikes he is able to find success because of his advantage: the son is in a wheelchair, the daughter has her foot tied to a doorknob, the mother is old and weak, and well the father is not even there. K gets caught because he cannot carry and walk with all three bodies, so he must take the car. He does not choose walking. Instead he chooses weight. His curiosity gives way to a desire that requires dependence. When the police arrive at the scene, K is standing in the doorway of the driver's seat. The officers circle the car, K is trapped. He is only able to walk toward the trunk.

What is it?

Picasso's *Bust of a Woman*. Guyton's inkjets. Malevich's *Black Square*. Warhol's *Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)*. Richter's *Six Gray Mirrors*. Robert Ryman's white canvases. Anne Truitt. Agnes Martin's graphite grids. Christopher Wool text and non-text. Albert Oehlen's computer paintings. Allen Ruppersberg *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Yves Klein's stupid blue. Stephen Prina's 1989 show "Monochrome Painting". Ad Reinhardt. Barnett Newman. Blinkey Palermo's triangles, though the aluminum panels in *To the People of New York City* are much more interesting. Rauschenberg's *White Painting.* Rauschenberg's bed. Lenore Tawney's *Manuscript Writing*. Piero Manzoni's "Achrome". Al Taylor's drawings. Oiticia's *Red Monochrome*. Ellsworth Kelly. Peppi Bottrop's paintings... *Lepidodendren*. Stella's *The Marriage of Reason and Squalor, II*. Mosset's *Monochrome vert, cercle*. Jutta Koether's red, but also *Mède (*1992), *Untitled (*1992), *Untitled (*1992), *Untitled (*1992), *Untitled (*1992) (a brief year of monochrome green). Polke *Lösungen* (Solutions), 1967. Polke *Tisch* (Table), 1963. Polke *Puppe* (Doll), 1965. Polke *Berliner (Bäckerblume)* (Doughnuts), 1965. Polke *Polkes gesammelte Werke* (Polke's Collected Works), 1969 (oil on cardboard, 15 3/4 x 59 1/16 in. (40 x 150 cm), Jerry and Emily Spiegel Family Collection, New York).

Chapter 46

Two extremities: out of the tube and dry brush. Now she understood what J was talking about when he sent her that photo of his "nubs". *Do you think if I sanded the canvases it would stop ripping up my brushes?* She said no it didn't matter. Did it? Well maybe it did.

Two hours of scrubbing a 54 1/2 x 11 inch rectangle, her round bristle brush looked like a short, chubby Christmas tree. No, if she applied it in circular motions head on, the brush would probably not end up looking like the tip of a thumb.

In an email sent out a photo was attached of the "straight from the tube" line. It's for the architectural line. It's for dimension. Two planes meeting in space to form, to the flat onlooker, an "equi-lateral" triangle from the top down. The peak of this triangle was denoted by the impasto paint. Another way to phrase it: the shift in planes of the beam which marked a structural intersection in the image was the paint. Or maybe: the joint of the perpendicular planes was the fluorescent Kama straight out of the tube. Flirting with tromp el'oeil?

Except there were breaks in the paint because she couldn't get the line to go all the way down on one go. Either she could wipe it and re-do it or just leave it. The problem which no one would care about but was extremely important to the painting was that both locations of the only retailer in Los Angeles to this particular brand of paint (which was the only brand that sold fluorescent oil) was out of stock of the vert green and it would "take a few weeks" for a new shipment to arrive, *we'll call you*. She had one 37ml tube left of which she was currently working out of, and then another which was

basically a goner. Sometimes the painting God just intervenes. The body of the email read: “these are just the joints in the painting” and the two accompanying images were a full body shot of the line and a close up of the joints.

Chapter 47

You did a surgical intervention on this tube of paint.

Chapter 48

I was thinking how to get rid of aesthetics with clothing. Quite simply clothing has color. Ok, so you want to make a neutral statement, well it seems fitting that that would be either white or black, but both of these colors hold histories and connotations. White, for instance, I think about God, I think about the beach, I think about Yeezy, I think about purity and resort wear. Black is the city, grime, dirt, but also God, goth, purity, Satan, the black bloc, anti-fashion, Alexander Wang…maybe white is that as well. Black is the color you wear to funerals and when you don't want to wash your clothes. Black is New York City. White is Los Angeles where everything is airy and light. White is a monastic. White and black is the newspaper, the book. Anyways I didn't want to make any decisions that felt pointed and personal because that's, well who cares, so I went with the decision to just do the logical conclusion which was if the clothing is ripped from the novel then let it just be the pages document, like you are reading a book. That felt pretty neutral. I want everything here to be neutral. So the next problem was, well how do you arrive at the styles within the collection? For instance, designers usually have a "theme" for the season. Think Margiela, who was anti-garment, think Alexander McQueen who did the bumster collections, or actually that style appeared within the collections, first in The Taxi Driver' for A/W 1993, his first show post-CSM. A/W '95 was "Highland Rape", "No. 13" with the spray-painting robot was S/S '99. Well so anyways, how to get rid of theme, this would be to collapse all styles into the same collection. Why not have corporate wear and a silk bathrobe? Or tennis garb with leisure pants? I'm shopping at

50 different grocery stores picking up local produce grown 5 miles from my house, freezer-burned Arby's meat, soy sauce and a tofu spring roll from the Pho place I go to on Sunset. J gave me some blueberries from the food distro, I'm throwing it all into the blender and making a smoothie and eating it for breakfast lunch and dinner, and the rest I'm bottling and selling over Depop and Etsy because we live in a world that wants me to aspire towards the small-business owner, the petite-bourgeois. So that's the deal with the clothes. At the end of the day they are functional garments, well, they are semi-functional. I mean…at the moment there aren't any closures on them and depending on your body size things may need to be adjusted, I'll get around to that.

Chapter 49

Question: You are saying all need to be completely separate and that the painting is primary, the other media are run-offs.... but... it seems to be that they need each other in order to function?

Answer: right, well they are run-offs, a run-off needs something to run off of. it's a branding strategy. maybe what i want to talk about is branding, which, painters are branders, or at least some are. some painters make the same thing all the time, and maybe that's what all this periphery nonsense or paraphernalia is about. but if you look at the paintings themselves, you will see that each painting is trying to work at new ways of painting itself (the content, whatever it is. in this case, it is this novel). for instance, the way the information within the painting is being disseminated is not through the same strategy each time. each canvas is taking the information and then i guess trying to figure out like how to try that in a new way. how to aesthetically pursue a new avenue. and the emphasis is on this in the painting. if the novel was the primary thing, well then all the paintings would be the exact same and they would function in service of the written word. that's where I guess this question of legibility comes into play, which is not really of great interest to me, or it is in the sense that I don't care if the novel is legible or not. Like, it's a painting. the legibility of text is secondary to the formal considerations of the painting, which, if explored on their own, can go down different routes and into considerations of painting itself. for instance, we can think about the paintings totally in different stages of finish. to someone these might look like underpaintings because it's graphite. there

are sections of the canvas that are not completely gessoed. when you look at one of the text paintings in relation to another you would see that one is done in graphite and one is done in paint. in some places there is so much impasto that it's ridiculous, like why is that underline so thick? that's just absurd. and it's not underlining anything. or why are those polka dots so thick? to accentuate the fashion? like are some parts of the painting just embellishment? if that's the case, then other parts are what, informational? some parts are necessary and then some parts aren't necessary? like which is which? I actually quite like this idea.

Chapter 50

12/11/21, 4:19:55 PM how mad would u be if I erased ur painting
12/11/21, 4:20:00 PM thats actuslly kind of funny
12/11/21, 4:20:09 PM that ur painting can be erased
12/11/21, 4:21:56 PM delete
12/11/21, 4:22:48 PM these are my deleted paintings
12/11/21, 4:23:20 PM no I mean I delete u from my life for saying this

Chapter 51

She thought about K a lot when she thought about painting. K did not live in Los Angeles. They knew each other in New York, but now were spread to communicating internationally, as he was no longer in the country. She remembers, years ago, being with him in his studio looking at the paintings with him and hearing him talk about his meeting with A, who had said to K, "now what does it mean that all these bodies are all of different races?" This was the year Dana Schutz had painted Emmett Till. K was painting athletes. And he would say to her, "I said to him, 'what?'". He would talk about the content of the painting as just an excuse to paint. *All of this stuff is just an excuse to paint, like it could be a banana or a tree or a man running.* It was honest but no one wanted to admit it. *I knew I needed a little green down there.*

K was concerned with how to paint the image. He liked her drawings so much because they were so abstract and it was like pushing the image to the point where it might suggest...was it representation? It was always this push and pull between representation and abstraction. *If your primary concern is figuring out how to balance the painting, then you are not in service of the image or the meaning outside of anything aside from the painting itself, you are in service of the literal painting, which is about characteristics that can only be explored within painting such as color, composition, the physical handling of the paint (which sits on a spectrum of the ability to depict imagery in a specific genre), ect.*

You must like the person and you must like the work and they must be seperate feelings of like-ing if you ever want to main-

tain longevity in a relationship.

K was cheating on her with S, a figurative painter who, though she hardly knew her, didn't seem at all concerned with issues of painting. From what she could tell she was making plein air and portrait paintings. S was also working on "the scroll painting". One of the first times she talked to S she told her "I like your scroll," which she didn't really mean but she did in an effort to be nice. She didn't understand her paintings. S refused to acknowledge her so she ended up being friends with the druggies and the drop outs who had good senses of humor and were into the same painters as her. When K broke up with her because he was too fucked up in the head she left New York and spent a day lying in bed feeling like she was going to die. On the phone to K she had told him she felt like she was going to die and she didn't understand what the point of life was, not in a threatening way but in a factual, this is how I feel in this moment, kind of way. A year later when she talked about it with Z Z said to her "I don't know why you ever dated that psychopath who left you for that plein air painter."

Chapter 52

Coffee in the morning usually helps stew the sludge in the stomach and intestines in a similar manner to the way a large pot of water will slowly heat up on a stove. If you leave the kitchen and settle on another activity for 5-10 minutes, depending on the amount of water and the dilation of the gas, in no time the main event will announce itself: the culmination of processes that alter the state of goods through the translation of properties. Solid becomes liquid, liquid becomes gas. Moving forward (and away from boiling water analogy) you can count on anywhere from 10-30 minutes of clean-up. A good place to do this business is of course in the privacy of your own home, but if circumstance warrants, a public stall is also agreeable. For one, you can usually rely on a great deal of anonymity, depending on the venue. It is not ideal to use a space you frequent often. The smaller the cohort the more likely it is that the pair of shoes visible in the gap between the bottom of the door and the floor will be identifiable to another occupant of the lavatory. And if the activity taking place is odious, it might not settle well in the mouth. However, if the place in which you enter is not a place of concern, it is a fine place to dump your shit. Do not be afraid to do one or many of the following:

1. loud noises. noise can be a perfect way to loosen the valves of the body's grip on the junk.
2. shifting positions on the bowl. notably lifting one buttcheck allows for pressure to be applied and released in different areas.
3. punching the stomach. be careful on this one but also do not be afraid to really go at it. we can substitute the word punch for massage

if it makes the shitter feel better. doing this allows, again, for any blockage to be on it's way again.
4. standing up before sitting down again. again, repositioning the body can allow for movement that was otherwise blocked to continue it's passage.
5. take a little bit of time. do not expect everything to come out at once. it would be a shame to leave the comfort of the stall to find that mere minutes later you need to go back.

Chapter 53

03/09/22, 8:42:16 PM i think u need to stress how important it is to know the relationship between ptnings fashion n book in way that focusses on like how important the relationship is which is guess is just an exercise in creating context rather than just grabbing from already existing things ur making the context
03/09/22, 8:44:15 PM does that make sense
03/09/22, 8:54:14 PM 66858085040__BCA04A04-0D6E-46E5-9742-F75619F5D8A3.jpeg
03/09/22, 8:54:17 PM im having a breakdown
03/09/22, 8:54:27 PM i have been trying to paint this for like an hour
03/09/22, 8:54:29 PM with a nail
03/09/22, 9:12:43 PM yes
03/09/22, 9:12:54 PM I am trying to make PAINTINGS
03/09/22, 9:13:11 PM But it is not the THING ABOUT IT
03/09/22, 9:13:23 PM And the NOVEL is a separate thing which can function in tandem with it
03/09/22, 9:13:32 PM Its a nice like side thing but it is not IMPORTANT to the PAINTINGS
03/09/22, 9:14:01 PM This whole thing is so ridiculous
03/09/22, 9:14:11 PM Its like THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT IN THE WORLD
03/09/22, 9:18:24 PM remove the significamce of the TEXT as a means to make the PAINTING but the CONTENT (drawn text) has its own significance in regard to where its from
03/09/22, 9:18:27 PM im so stoned
03/09/22, 9:18:30 PM that makes no sense

03/09/22, 9:18:38 PM theres something there gove me a min
03/09/22, 9:23:10 PM hahahhahaa
03/09/22, 9:23:36 PM get stoned and think about it for like 3 hours, come to a conclusion and tell me what the work is about

Chapter 54

A short play. *S, A, L and S in S's studio. S has just finished a part of the painting. A's hand is hovering over the projection bulb. This play is set in Los Angeles during March 2022.*

S: take it away
A moves her hand, which has been blocking the projection
S: now put it back
A blocks the projection with her hand
S: take it away again
A moves her hand away
S: now back again
A puts her hand back
L: (muffled garble) painting (muffled garble)
S: shit
END

Chapter 55

In S's studio after the lecture by JP, she is sitting on the floor against the wall with M and L. L had brought a bottle of red wine.

"The organic stuff doesn't give you a hangover."

S is the only one of the group standing and this is because S is painting. Her canvas is flat on two horses.

"I have to set this down because I do not want to have to redo the piece." S has been staying at the studio every night until 3, sometimes 3:30 AM.

She asked S what would happen if she spilled something on the painting.

"Well then I would make you buy the painting."

"Right and so you could still show the piece because it was already sold. I would do the same. If all the pieces pre-sold I would show them damaged."

The discussion turned back to what they had discussed in her studio earlier that evening. She had finished a section of the painting, the underpainting, and had decided that aesthetically she quite liked it. The next move on the painting, which fit the conceptual framework, was to wash the whole painting with text, which she had already done partially to the header of the painting (a section which required no underpainting) but subsequently was repelled by, aesthetically speaking. It looked absolutely awful and it was a group consensus by A, L, D and M that the painting should be finished as it was. She was explaining to them, however, that she already had one which abided by the framework (of the painting in the state that it was in) and so to continue in the logic of the overarching funda-

mental rule of the series, she had to obliterate the whole thing with the text. S had explained to her that she was dealing with the same problem.

"I made this move in the painting that was so conscious and driven by aesthetic pleasure but it does not make sense at all conceptually. You see here that the cityscape does not look like a computer-generated image. It looks all like this and this." S was moving her hand, instead of in a horizontally and vertically choppy manner with many right angles as a computer-generated image might appear, in upward diagonals and waterfalls, the curvatures of rounded mounds.

"When I'm painting I don't make any decisions I just execute. But when I did this I broke, and I stepped back and I looked at the painting."

"Absolutely. You are going to have to redo that."

M explained that she didn't understand. M had not been in her studio where the conversation had began. She explained to M that S had had a moment of subjectivity in the painting process, like a screw had come loose and a flower had plopped out. S was a machine and the painting was an efficient execution process. It was really the ideal model. Was aesthetic expressionism facism? She wondered about this a lot.

Back in her studio, screaming over the wall to D who was living next door in the gallery and hammering away at the wall (presumably hanging paintings although one could never be certain), she explained that she was going to obliterate the painting with text. She was realizing more and more, to which she announced to D, that this was really just bad painting.

Chapter 56

A short play. *S and JS are in S's studio. This play is set in Los Angeles, March 2022.*

S: I'm thinking about doing the reading in D's studio
JS: like in the bed
S: no in the loft and then everyone would be down below
JS: oh so kind of like Mussolini
S: right
END

Chapter 57

“Pictures painted in shades of green are passive and ten to be wearisome; this contrasts with the active warmth of yellow or the active coolness of blue. If one goes out and one goes in, well then the combination of the two would result in a passivity. In the hierachy of colors green is the “bourgeoise” - self-satisfied, immovable, narrow. It is the color of summer, the period when nature is resting from the storms of winter and the productive energy of spring.”

“Whoever paints green doesn’t understand the natural world.”

Her green had nothing to do with nature. It had nothing to do with trees, or grass, or leaves or stems of flowers. It wasn’t camouflage or green beans. It wasn’t green for “go” and it wasn’t green for toxicity. It was not the library lamp in her room. It was not moss and it was not seaweed and it was not for CAN’s “I’m So Green”. It had nothing to do with money, or the anecdote, although she liked both these things a lot. It might even be that green was not her favorite color, or preferred color, but that she had been telling herself that this was the case for as long as she could remember and she didn’t know where else to turn. One can always turn back to green.

GREEN FLOURESCENT PAINTINGS AREN’T GREEN SCREENS BUT the monochrome painting allows for an opportunity of projection although this wasn’t necessarily the point either. It could be interesting to consider that within the monochrome there are a thousand hypothetical paintings, a thousand colors to speculate, a certain refusal of the spectrum allows for the mind to wander down it’s own path...

When one green thing follows another green thing well then a new tube must follow. She was not traveling the lands in order to check out where green was thought and how it was thought about. This could come later, in the future, at the exhaustion of the first numbering:

1. Kama Pigmments / Fluorescent pigment Green / PS-FL0200

but she had not arrived past it yet.

On the basis of green, green took up the image. Green took up the terms and definitions of the painting. She would help herself to these endless tubes that ended when the stock was out. Green is ready to be painted straight out of the tube, with gamsol or with walnut oil.

Chapter 58

M designed the bookshelf and the couch. It's pine and the sides are so smooth because, well, there were all these knots that I loved but C hated so we had the woodworker come back and sand them down. He sanded this three times. A rubs his hand over the wood. *Notice under here, it's rough. And here, and here. Did you see all my accoutrements?*

There were two miniature chairs, one larger than the other so that the seat of the larger one could house the smaller. *And sometimes I will stack them this way but C doesn't like it so she will move it back after I've done it.* She asked A who had arrived at the color of the couch, which was blue. *I picked it out. It's great isn't it? I love it*.

Chapter 59

M's notes said SSSSSSSSSSssssss at the top in furry lettering. When did it happen that when they began to see each other they started drawing out their names in a low, deep voice. At the bottom it said "skuzzy - confidence. Grudgy-boom". K said something about JK and there being a connection with her even though the paintings look vastly different. Like a type of negation? Or a fuck off. A said something at the end about convenience.

"It is convenient for you to take this position. We all have this problem but you choose to make work about it."

C later told her that it was a question surrounding the language that she choose to frame the work in. He kept saying something about loops and that if she figured out the right way to phrase it she could loop it back on itself. She was having a hard time solving this equation in her head but it was possibly worth examining further.

In the hallway after class she caught up to A and asked him to clarify what he was saying. She told him that she was interested in the problem of what is there to paint. He said that it was an uninteresting problem and painters today are past that problem.

"Well, sure, I agree that they are past that problem and the problem has shifted into narcissism. Like this reflects the contemporary climate. Painter A chooses to paint their dog painter B chooses to make paintings about the history of painting with a touch of their dog or AI painter C chooses to make paintings about contemporary politics painter D chooses to make paintings about contemporary politics with a touch of their dog and a touch of the history of painting all chosen for them through AI. I am painter E who wants to

make paintings about the possibility of the choice to make paintings about all these things but enacting none of them which is maybe actually just being painter D but having the awareness that this is a trope. My hand which is painting this painting, and choosing these colors, is ever present and the paint itself and the iconography lend themselves to aesthetics. Well everything lends itself to aesthetics." She was beginning to confuse herself and was running after him. He was in a hurry, somewhere, presumably to get anywhere, away from her.

"We can talk about it later."

Later that night she was sitting in her studio thinking about how somehow the conversation surrounding her paintings, by way of deflection, always ends up with her negating everything and that the work is maybe just about the feedback loop of interest in these things: choice, too much choice, burst of something, frustration, pulling back, stopping before anything can really be said. Deflection was interesting as a LANGUAGECONVERSATION tool for the painter but she did't want the work to be about deflection.

Chapter 60

Nice Saying Hello

I'm trying to wizzle my way out of my obligations because I need all the time that makes up the day to do absolutely nothing in the disguise of something important. You know me. I consider this, let's find a new name and just call it living, to be a big part of my work now. I'm so tired I'm splashing around like water, and seeing spots on the laptop screen and on my own eyeballs. Wow. I guess I'm dead! It's a lot. As far as money goes, I owe $507.32 to LADWP. This whole year totally ruined me for the summer but so what. Time flies. When I see you again, it will be something truly new.

Chapter 61

Well, the classic novel is past its sell-by date. Now we have no editors and no publishing houses. How do I work with this? Well I simply use the system. I fabricate a "fake" "popular" novel. I kidnap a plot. I kidnap all the plots and all the writings and I don't return them. I make it into some kind of joke, a critique of the critique of the novel itself. This in itself is not anything worthy of confession, as it is not worth anything of celebration. We no longer make mischief as we no longer make love. We recognize that we no longer make mischief or love and we attempt to make both mischief and love.

We don't have a sense of sin or transgression. No terrible punishment awaits us at the end of the tale. When a passing fling perhaps even a love story, dissipates, of course there is a certain amount of bitterness, but what remains? Vague regrets, a hangover, a yearning for new adventures. But to what end?

To scramble the narrative one cuts itself into shorter segments. Little slips of paper to throw into a hat and shuffle. The drift is not a hobby, it is a way of life. Letting steps guide us through the city of literature without following a set path or pursuing any particular goal. Be drawn from the forces emanating from sentences, capitalizations, punctuations, paragraph breaks, chapter headings, the dreaded footnote, a grouping of words, the blank page following the title page, planning nothing in advance. Go into the fish store and purchase a fish. It has often been said that the culture has changed a lot in the past years, largely growing uglier. It's not the first time. It would seem that everyone has decided that after the culture of their own youth, it's Armageddon. This is a story of love, of crazy love, for the

words, for the words on the pages, the words surrounding the pages, for the zig-zagging through the pages, for the streets of the words and for the streets of the city that make up the words and for the streets that house the words that bring us to the city in the first place.

Well the classic painting is past its sell-by date. Now we have no artists and no painters. How do I work with this? Well I simply use the system. I fabricate a "fake" "popular" painting. I kidnap a painting. I kidnap all the paintings and all the techniques and I don't return them. I make it into some kind of joke, a critique of the critique of painting itself. This in itself is not anything worthy of confession, as it is not worth anything of celebration. We no longer make mischief as we no longer make love. We recognize that we no longer make mischief or love and we attempt to make both mischief and love.
We don't have a sense of sin or transgression. No terrible punishment awaits us at the end of the tale. When a passing painting perhaps a love story, dissipates, of course there is a certain amount of bitterness, but what remains? Vague regrets, a hangover, a yearning for new adventures. But to what end?
To scramble the group one cuts itself into shorter segments. Little slips of paint to throw into a hat and shuffle. The drift is not a hobby, it is a way of life. Letting steps guide us through the city of painting without following a set path or pursuing any particular goal. Be drawn from the forces emanating from out of the tube, gamsol, linseed oil, the use of a knife, gesso, graphite, raw canvas, the stretcher bar, the projection, the wrist, planning nothing in advance. Go into the fish store and purchase a fish. It has often been said that the culture has changed a lot in the past years, largely growing uglier. It's not the first time. It would seem that everyone has decided that after the culture of their own youth, it's Armageddon. This is a group of paintings of love, of crazy love, for the paint, for the materials of the paintings, for the paintings surrounding the paintings, for the zig-zagging through the rooms housing the paintings, for the streets

of the paintings and for the streets of the city that make up the paintings and for the streets that house the paintings that bring us to the city in the first place.

Well the classic garment is past its sell-by date. Now we have no designers and no couture houses. How do I work with this? Well I simply use the system. I fabricate a "fake" "popular" garment. I kidnap a garment. I kidnap all the garments: all the fabrics and all the patterns and I don't return them. I make it into some kind of joke, a critique of the critique of the garment itself. This in itself is not anything worthy of confession, as it is not worth anything of celebration. We no longer make mischief as we no longer make love. We recognize that we no longer make mischief or love and we attempt to make both mischief and love.

We don't have a sense of sin or transgression. No terrible punishment awaits us at the end of the show. When a passing turtleneck perhaps a love story, dissipates, of course there is a certain amount of bitterness, but what remains? Vague regrets, a hangover, a yearning for new adventures. But to what end?

To scramble the collection one cuts itself into shorter segments. Little slips of fabric to throw into a hat and shuffle. The drift is not a hobby, it is a way of life. Letting steps guide us through the city of fashion without following a set path or pursuing any particular goal. Be drawn from the forces emanating from felt, plackets, a stocking, the ill-fitting jacket, a perfect hem, the dreaded raw edge, a piling of garments on the body, planning nothing in advance. Go into the fish store and purchase a fish. It has often been said that the culture has changed a lot in the past years, largely growing uglier. It's not the first time. It would seem that everyone has decided that after the culture of their own youth, it's Armageddon. This is a story of love, of crazy love, for the clothes, for the fabric of the clothes, for the clothes surrounding the clothes, for the zig-zagging through the clothes, for the streets of the clothes and for the streets of the city

that make up the clothes and for the streets that house the clothes that bring us to the city in the first place.

Acknowledgements

This book is dedicated to my friends and mentors at Art Center. It is also dedicated to Reena and Geneviève, and all the great authors I stole from, there were a lot.

About the author

There will be a fashion show following the release of the novel and the paintings. To recieve information about the event please email magfri00@gmail.com.